

MINUTES
Virginia Board of Education
School and Division Accountability Committee
March 18, 2008
3:30 p.m.
Jefferson Conference Room, James Monroe Building

Welcome and Opening Comments

Mr. David L. Johnson, Chairman

Report on Process for Requesting Changes in Accountability Ratings of Schools Subject to NCLB Sanctions or Accreditation Denied When School Changes Result in a New School Code--A Report to the Committee on School and Division Accountability

Comments by Dr. Kathleen M. Smith, Director of School Improvement,
Department of Education

Presentation Highlights:

- Reviewed administrative procedures for school closures, mergers, or reconfiguration of grade levels that will result in the assignment of a new school code and changes in accountability ratings of schools subject to NCLB sanctions or accreditation denied when changes result in a new school code.
 - Administrative procedures require school divisions to report whether a school is closing, merging, or reconfiguration of grade levels will result in a need for a new school code under the federal National Center for Education Statistics guidelines.
 - Local school boards must make a request to the Board of Education for a change in the state or federal accountability status for a school that meets one or more of the following:
 - Accreditation Denied or Conditionally Accredited under provisions of 8 VAC 20-131-315;
 - Identified as in school improvement, corrective action, restructuring, or alternate governance under NCLB;
 - A school in a division under division-level review with a memorandum of understanding for accountability purposes with the Board of Education.

Report on Schools Conditionally Accredited, 2007-2008

Introductory Comments by Dr. Smith

Presentation Highlights:

- Highlights of the alternative governance committees and work of the districts (Newport News and Pulaski) were presented.

- A panel presentation was provided that included auditors, contractors, and division-level staff assigned to work with conditional schools.
 - Members discussed the following:
 - Dr. Valerie Taylor, auditor, discussed the challenges that her assigned school is working to overcome. Dr. Taylor discussed the issue of classroom management with new teachers.
 - Ms. Annie Harman, contractor and auditor, discussed how the school divisions are using the Center on Innovation and Improvement (CII) support Web site to foster increased student achievement. Ms. Harman indicated through the training available to divisions, staff share best practices and ask questions as to how they can establish better practices at the division-level to foster school improvement in low-performing schools.
 - Ms. Thomasyne Beverly, auditor, discussed how she has assisted principals in her assigned schools in developing effective leadership skills.
 - Ms. Judy Johnston, auditor, described some of the successes in her assigned schools. Ms. Johnston pointed out one of the greatest successes was sustainability. She indicated that with the help of the Office of School Improvement the school divisions' central office staffs now have a process in place to provide assistance to low-performing schools.
 - Ms. Janice Pierson, director of instruction, Essex County Public Schools, discussed some of the differences with regard to the district's role this year in comparison to last year in the school improvement process. Ms. Pierson stated the primary difference from last year to this year is the increased demand on her time as the school improvement coordinator between the state and school administration.
- An overview of the district support department Web site and the Center for Innovation & Improvement Web site was provided.
- An overview of electronic databases used for monitoring by the Office of School Improvement was provided.